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FLOOR DEBATE

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they can build a new jail without raising property taxes is through a contract arrangement. According to the U.S. Department of Justice report, jails have been built in other states that meet or exceed standards, that are built faster and for less money. In today's tight budgets, we have to be creative to best use our limited resources. In fact, as Pam Lancaster, Chair of the Hall County Board of Supervisors, put it, the traditional tax and spend method, in light of today's economy, is irresponsible if there are sound business practices that can be used. To make it financially feasible, they have been forced to look at options that include contracting with private businesses to build and manage an expanded facility with room to house inmates for other entities, such as Immigration detainees, that would pay per diem to Hall County to cover some of the cost of the facility. The board of supervisors that also serves as the county corrections board would sign all contracts and have oversight over all construction and management activities. Hall County needs to build a new jail. They need to do it with minimal taxpayer money. I believe they can do this responsibly, providing adequate care for inmates and meeting state standards through well-worded contracts. Last year I visited a county jail facility that had been built and was managed by private contractors in Texas. I can tell you that it was a very well-run facility. Their safety record and rehabilitative programs for prisoners were very good. In a county such as Hall County, the county board members are close enough to maintain oversight of the facility. Believe me, they have...they would know everything that happens at their facility. I ask you to assist me by supporting LB 656 and clearing up a seemingly conflicting message in current statutes. I know there's a couple senators on the floor that have adamant disagreement with what we're trying to do here, and of course I invite them and all other senators to ask questions or share their opinions with the rest of the body, because I'd kind of like to see who else out there has an opinion and if maybe their county would be in the same situation as Hall County and looking for additional ways to try to accomplish this as we need to. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Aguilar. You've heard the opening on LB 656. Mr. Clerk, priority motion.